

The State of Multi-Year Funding 2011

By Niki Jagpal and Kevin Laskowski

Multi-year funding is essential for nonprofits' sustainability, impact and development. However, since 2004, only one-tenth of sampled funders reported any multi-year grantmaking. Ninety percent of sampled foundations either do not provide multi-year grants or do not provide sufficient information to classify them as such.¹ Fully 89 percent of 1,121 sampled funders reported no multi-year grants in 2011.

Multi-year grant dollars reached \$6.9 billion in 2008 (44 percent of authorized grant dollars), before falling to \$5.5 billion (25 percent) in 2009. By circa 2011, multi-year support rebounded to \$7.2 billion (29 percent) of grant dollars. However, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation alone provided 60 percent of those multi-year grant dollars.

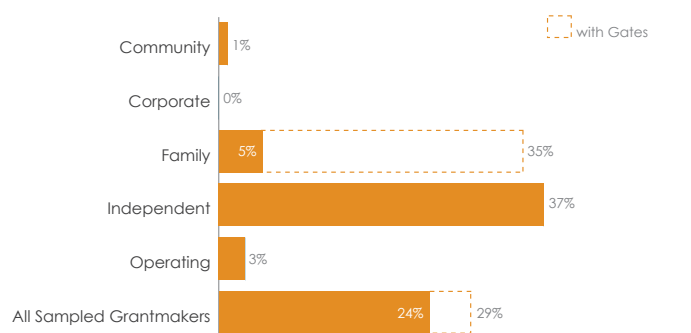
NCRP's *Criteria for Philanthropy at Its Best* encourages grantmakers to provide at least 50 percent of grant dollars as multi-year grants.² Multi-year grants offer grantees a firm commitment of funding for more than one year, allowing nonprofits to build and strengthen their infrastructure, increase effectiveness and invest in leadership development and organizational capacity.

Grant dollars given by independent foundations (Figure 1), Western foundations (Northeastern foundations if the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is excluded – Figure 2) and larger funders (Figure 3) were more likely to provide multi-year support. Nonetheless, only 5 percent of sampled funders gave at the recommended level.

Multi-year grants remain scarce despite broad acknowledgment of the benefits of having predictable levels of support over several years. Unless more funders begin to provide multi-year funding, nonprofits' impact and success will continue to be limited.

Figure 1. Reported Multi-Year Grantmaking by Foundation Type ▽

Independent foundations are most likely to report multi-year grantmaking.



2011 AT A GLANCE



\$7.2B

Reported multi-year
grant dollars



29%

Share of total grants
classified as multi-year
support



89%

Percentage of funders
reporting no multi-year
grants

Figure 2. Reported Multi-Year Grantmaking by Foundation Region ▶

Grantmakers in the south are the least likely to report multi-year grant dollars.

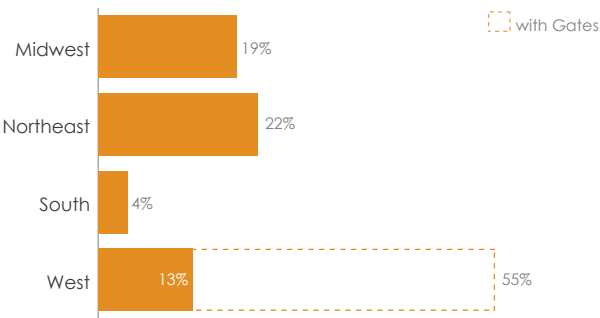


Figure 3. Reported Multi-Year Grantmaking by Foundation Size ▶

Funders giving \$10 million or more are more likely to provide multi-year funding.

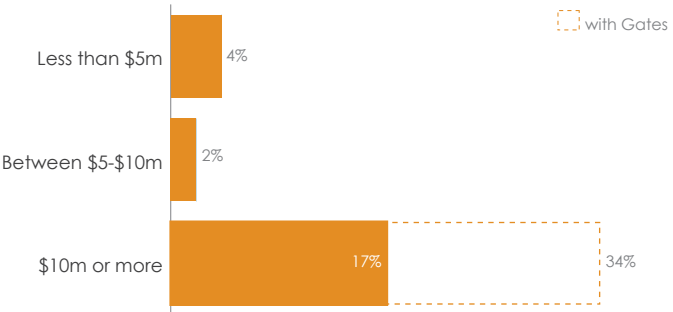
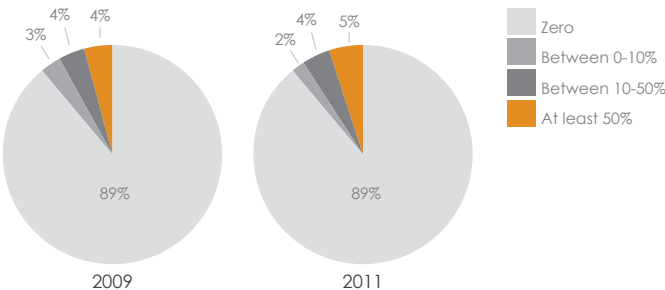


Figure 4. How Much Multi-Year Funding Do Grantmakers Provide? ▶

Almost 90 percent of sampled grantmakers do not report any multi-year grants.



LARGEST MULTI-YEAR FUNDERS

In 2011, 57 grantmakers (5 percent of the 1,121 sampled) reported at least 50 percent of their grant dollars as multi-year grants, the level encouraged by NCRP.

Table 1. Largest Funders by Share of Total Giving for Multi-Year Grants, 2011 ▾

FOUNDATION NAME	STATE	MULTI-YEAR SUPPORT	
		AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	WA	\$4,298,092,177	98%
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation	NY	\$219,475,815	95%
Foundation for Child Development	NY	\$1,489,976	94%
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation	NY	\$31,649,212	93%
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation	NY	\$78,401,034	91%
The California Wellness Foundation	CA	\$29,670,000	91%
Burroughs Wellcome Fund	NC	\$19,193,137	91%

Table 1. Largest Funders by Share of Total Giving for Multi-Year Grants, 2011 (continued) ▾

FOUNDATION NAME	STATE	MULTI-YEAR SUPPORT	
		AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
W. K. Kellogg Foundation	MI	\$260,602,191	90%
Annenberg Foundation	CA	\$86,852,410	89%
The Tinker Foundation Inc.	NY	\$3,412,000	87%
Walther Cancer Foundation, Inc.	IN	\$5,472,079	86%
Charles K. Blandin Foundation	MN	\$9,078,900	86%
Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, Inc.	IN	\$4,366,000	84%
J. Paul Getty Trust	CA	\$7,860,290	83%
1675 Foundation	PA	\$1,500,000	82%
The Starr Foundation	NY	\$79,080,000	82%
The Ford Family Foundation	OR	\$7,374,080	82%
Carnegie Corporation of New York	NY	\$84,328,300	82%
The Maxine and Jack Zarrow Family Foundation	OK	\$3,785,000	81%
The McKnight Foundation	MN	\$49,964,000	81%
The Kresge Foundation	MI	\$118,528,497	80%
The Skoll Foundation	CA	\$19,582,695	80%
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation	FL	\$55,966,766	80%
Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust	NC	\$17,635,120	79%
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	IL	\$138,733,403	79%

Table 2. Largest Multi-Year Funders by Total Giving in 2011 ▾

FOUNDATION NAME	STATE	MULTI-YEAR SUPPORT	
		AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	WA	\$4,298,092,177	98%
Ford Foundation	NY	\$280,057,304	67%
W. K. Kellogg Foundation	MI	\$260,602,191	90%
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation	NY	\$219,475,815	95%
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	NJ	\$213,106,072	65%
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	CA	\$142,813,350	73%
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	IL	\$138,733,403	79%
The Kresge Foundation	MI	\$118,528,497	80%
The Rockefeller Foundation	NY	\$93,486,505	69%
Annenberg Foundation	CA	\$86,852,410	89%
Carnegie Corporation of New York	NY	\$84,328,300	82%
The Starr Foundation	NY	\$79,080,000	82%

Table 2. Largest Multi-Year Funders by Total Giving in 2011 (continued) ▾

FOUNDATION NAME	STATE	MULTI-YEAR SUPPORT	
		AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation	NY	\$78,401,034	91%
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation	CA	\$71,636,868	29%
Houston Endowment Inc.	TX	\$67,892,173	72%
The California Endowment	CA	\$63,927,338	56%
The William Penn Foundation	PA	\$60,267,582	70%
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation	FL	\$55,966,766	80%
The McKnight Foundation	MN	\$49,964,000	81%
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	CA	\$48,235,054	74%
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation	MI	\$47,516,683	57%
The James Irvine Foundation	CA	\$45,249,000	78%
Arcus Foundation	MI	\$36,963,126	76%
The Wallace Foundation	NY	\$32,565,000	54%
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation	NY	\$31,649,212	93%

METHODOLOGY

NCRP worked with the Foundation Center to develop custom datasets using the Center's grants sample database, which includes detailed information on all grants of \$10,000 or more awarded to organizations circa 2011 by 1,121 of the largest U.S. foundations.

Figures for multi-year giving are captured only for foundations that provided full authorized grant amounts and grant durations either publicly or directly to the Foundation Center. Foundations noted in the data as giving zero to multi-year support either did not give such grants or did not provide enough information to code them as such. NCRP encourages grantmakers to contact the Foundation Center to ensure appropriate classification of their grants.

For more information or to see how your foundation performs compared to its peers, please contact research@ncrp.org. ■

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NOTES

1. Niki Jagpal and Kevin Laskowski, *The State of Multi-Year Funding* (Washington, DC: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, 2012), <http://ncrp.org/files/publications/PhilanthropicLandscape-StateofMultiYearFunding-Revised.pdf>.
2. Niki Jagpal, *Criteria for Philanthropy at Its Best: Benchmarks to Assess and Enhance Grantmaker Impact* (Washington, DC: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, 2009), <http://www.ncrp.org/paib>.

ABOUT NCRP

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